

REMARKS

Claims 26, 28-30, 33-39, and 45 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 26 and 45 are amended, and new claims 49-52 are added.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection

Claims 26, 28, 34, and 38 are rejected as anticipated by WO 01/19936 ("Healey"). Applicant respectfully traverses. With respect to claim 26, Healey does not disclose providing a moulding tool which is distinct from the second aircraft component. Furthermore, Healey does not disclose the formation of a shim on a first aircraft component using a moulding tool which is distinct from the second aircraft component, and then removing the first aircraft component, with shim, from the moulding tool. Healey discloses providing first and second aircraft components in spaced relation to one another and then forming a shim between the two aircraft components.

It is therefore clear that there are many differences between claim 26 and Healey, and therefore it is novel over Healey. Moreover, as claims 28, 34 and 38 all depend from claim 26, applicant requests removal of those rejections as well.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 29, 30, 33, 35-37, 39, and 45 as obvious based on Healey combined with the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art and the prior art disclosed in the specification. The applicant contests that this is not the case. With respect to claims 35, 36, 37, and 39, the Examiner fails to provide any articulated reason with rational underpinning to support the conclusory nature of the rejections.

In forming his arguments, the Examiner states that Healey discloses all of the features of claim 45 except for the use of composite components. This is clearly not the case. Healey discloses providing first and second aircraft components in spaced relationship to one another and forming a shim between the two components. Healey does not disclose the method of claim 45. The use of a moulding tool which is distinct from the second aircraft component is not disclosed in Healey. Furthermore, in claim 45 there is a clear distinction between the resin infusion system comprising the moulding tool and the second aircraft component. Healey does not disclose forming a shim using the resin infusion system, removing the first aircraft component (with shim) and joining the first aircraft component (with shim) to a second aircraft component. The Examiner has therefore not provided convincing reasons as to why claim 45 is obvious in light of Healey. Furthermore, given the many differences between the subject matter of claim 45 and Healey, there is no teaching, suggestion or motivation in Healey to arrive at the subject matter of claim 45. For example, there is no teaching, suggestion or motivation in Healey to use a moulding tool distinct from the second aircraft component. As independent claims 26 and 45 are amended, the obviousness rejections of claims 29, 30, 33, 35-37, 39, and 45 should be removed.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. G. Dickson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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